

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**LOCAL WIC PROGRAM TO ROLL OUT NEW ELECTRONIC BENEFIT CARD THIS WEEK!**

**Eau Claire, Wisconsin – June 15, 2015** – Across Wisconsin during the month of June, local Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Programs are rolling out brand new electronic benefit cards or eWIC for participants. The Eau Claire City-County Health Department's WIC program is set to roll-out on June 17, 2015.



The statewide decision to implement eWIC comes from The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Public Law 111-296, which was signed into law by President Obama on December 13, 2010. The act expanded several nutrition assistance programs, including WIC. It also orders that State WIC food benefits change from a paper-based benefit "check" to an electronic benefit card by October 1, 2020.

About 1,950 local WIC participants are served each month by the Eau Claire City-County Health Department's WIC Program and will be affected by the roll-out. The WIC program works to help to prevent obesity, one of the priority health areas that came out of the 2015 Eau Claire Community Health Assessment, and provides information on ways in which families can incorporate healthy nutrition into their daily lifestyles.

"Our local WIC participants have been asking for this change for some time now," says Beth Draeger, Eau Claire City-County Health Department Public Health Nutrition Supervisor. "We have spent time attending training ourselves and working with local WIC approved stores to be ready for this transition to go smoothly for our participants."

eWIC has been successfully implemented in several states, with many other states also in the process of transitioning. States that have implemented eWIC noted several improvements to the WIC program, including:

- Elimination of paper checks has improved the shopping experience for WIC participants
- Electronic approval of WIC items has improved the check-out experience for cashiers
- Electronic payment processing has improved the reconciliation process for retail vendors
- eWIC issuance of benefits has streamlined the process in the WIC clinic

The local WIC program provides pregnant women, infants and children with time to talk with a WIC dietician, support for breastfeeding, help monitoring healthy growth and development and assistance to buy healthy foods. To learn more about WIC and whether you or someone you know may qualify please call 715-839-5051 or visit [www.eauclairewi.gov/wic](http://www.eauclairewi.gov/wic).

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